

**Appln No. 10/812,287**

**Reply to Office Action of October 20, 2005**

**REMARKS/ARGUMENT**

Claims 31-55 are pending in this application, of which claims 31 and 42 are independent. With this Amendment claims 36 and 47 have been cancelled. Claims 31 and 42 have been amended to include the limitations from claims 36 and 47, and claims 53 and 55 have been amended to place them into independent form. The amendments add no new matter and find full support in the application as originally filed. In view of the above amendments and following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and a timely indication of allowance.

**Summary of Interview**

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for taking the time to speak with Applicant's representative on December 14, 2005. During the interview, the Applicant's representative and the Examiner discussed the rejection of the claims over U.S. Patent No. 6,515,592 ("the '592 patent").

The discussion focused on the subject matter of Figures 15 to 17 of the '592 patent, and supporting text. Applicant's representative pointed out that although the '592 patent does disclose multiple "separate conductors," that all of these separate conductors were used to form a single electrical pathway for electrical components in a single circuit, and that accordingly the '592 patent could not be said to anticipate dependent claims 36 or 47, which require that the multiple conductors form "separate electrical pathways."

In light of this distinct difference Applicant's representative proposed amending independent claims 31 and 42 to include this "separate electrical pathway" limitation.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)**

As discussed above, the Examiner rejected claims 31-37, 39, 40, 42-48, 50 and 51 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Babour et al. (the '592 patent.) Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 31 is directed to a drill pipe for an oil or gas well comprising "a generally cylindrical hollow drill pipe having a length; and a conductive coating connected to the

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drill pipe to define an electrical pathway that extends along at least a portion of the length of the drill pipe," and further having a "second conductive coating connected to the drill pipe to define a second electrical pathway." Likewise, claim 42 is directed to a method of communicating downhole in a gas or oil well using a drill pipe having such a two conductor/two electrical path design.

As discussed above, referring to Figures 15 to 17 of the '592 patent, although the drill pipe of the device has two conductors 122 & 140, in each case there is only a single electrical path, as defined by the arrows (12) in the Figures. Accordingly, the '592 patent cannot be said to disclose at least two conductors that define at least two electrical pathways as required by all of the rejected claims.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 31-37, 39, 40, 42-48, 50 and 51 are in condition for allowance, and a timely indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

**Conclusion**

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the remaining claims are allowable over the cited prior art references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration, reexamination, and an early indication of allowance. If there are any remaining issues that can be addressed by telephone, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the number indicated.

Respectfully submitted,

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